



Glastonbury High School

330 Hubbard Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033-3099

Telephone: (860) 652-7200 ext 2106 Fax: (860) 652-7239

Email: witkint@glastonburyus.org

School Website: www.glastonburyus.org

Trish Witkin, CMAA, Director of Athletics

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Supportive Testimony Regarding

House Bill 6383- AN ACT CONCERNING HIRING STANDARDS FOR ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

My name is Trish Witkin and I am the Athletic Director of Glastonbury High School. I am the Past President of the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD) and currently am serving on the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrator Association (NIAAA) Board of Directors, representing New England, New York and New Jersey.

The responsibilities of athletic directors in education based athletics are very challenging and ever changing. The AD must ensure all members of their staff are in compliance State Department of Education certification requirements and meets the individual district requirements for hiring. We coordinate schedules, transportation, secure officials for all contests and verify all of our programs and coaches are in compliance with CIAC regulations. Athletic Directors are responsible for the supervision, evaluation and education of their coaches. We manage the uniform and equipment needs of our programs as well as oversee facilities to make sure they are safe for athletic play.

The Athletic Director works diligently to provide a quality education based experience for each student-athlete in their school. This is achieved through programming on the value of education based athletics, the importance of sportsmanship, student-leadership initiatives, anti-bullying/anti-hazing strategies and ensuring a safe and healthy environment exists for all participants. Other responsibilities include educating the staff and student athletes on the appropriate use of electronic and social media, importance of proper health and nutrition, monitoring academic and eligibility standards while also recognizing our student-athletes for their academic and athletic successes.

Based on the facts that Connecticut is experiencing a 15-20% turnover of its athletic director positions each year and of that group nearly half leave after their first year, and, 67% of the Athletic Directors in Connecticut have less than 5 years' experience, it is clear that these people are entering the profession unprepared and lack the qualifications needed for the rigors of this job.

The position of Athletic Director has been impacted tremendously by the before mentioned regulations and societal changes to the position. The qualifications of the athletic director should be elevated to a level that is reflective of the challenge and responsibility of the position. In addition, the very individual in the district responsible for the mandates passed through legislation should be mentioned in state statutes.

I respectfully request the committee support House Bill 6383. I ask that you consider adding the following clause to section 1(b) & 1(c) to protect those in positions under the previous regulations:

"Any person who holds the appropriate credentials and serves in the position of Athletic Director prior to July 1, 2013 shall not be subject to the provisions of this section unless they move to a new school district."

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Witkin

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